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**CENTENNIAL HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED
GATORADE NEVADA GIRLS CROSS COUNTRY RUNNER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (January 10, 2013) — In its 28th year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, in collaboration with USA TODAY High School Sports, today announced Sydney Badger of Centennial High School as its 2012-13 Gatorade Nevada Girls Cross Country Runner of the Year. Badger is the first Gatorade Nevada Girls Cross Country Runner of the Year to be chosen from Centennial High School.

The award, which recognizes not only outstanding athletic excellence, but also high standards of academic achievement and exemplary character demonstrated on and off the racecourse, distinguishes Badger as Nevada's best high school girls cross country runner. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Girls Cross Country Runner of the Year award to be announced in January, Badger joins an elite alumni association of past state award-winners in 12 sports, including Ryan Hall (1999-00, 2000-01, Big Bear HS, Calif.), Derek Jeter (1991-92, Kalamazoo HS, Mich.), Candace Parker (2001-02, Naperville Central HS, Ill.), Abby Wambach (1997-98, Our Lady of Mercy, N.Y.) and Mark Sanchez (2004-05, Mission Viejo HS, Calif.).

The 5-foot-7 junior finished 15th at the Nike Cross Nationals Southwest Regional championships this past season with a time of 17:48. Badger was also the state's top finisher at the Foot Locker West Regional championships, crossing the line in 19:16 to take 25th. She was fourth at the Division I state championships in 20:25.1, and earned victories at the Larry Burgess Invitational, the Central Park Invitational and the Sunset Regional Championships.

Badger has maintained a 3.97 GPA in the classroom. A member of her school's student council, she has volunteered as an academic tutor.

"Sydney never ran before her freshman year, but she loves it now," said Centennial High head coach Roy Sessions. "She wants to be an elite runner, a national-caliber athlete, and she'll do whatever it takes to be successful."

Badger will begin her senior year of high school this fall.

The [Gatorade Player of the Year](#) program annually recognizes one winner in the District of Columbia and each of the 50 states that sanction high school football, girls volleyball, boys and girls cross country, boys and girls basketball, boys and girls soccer, baseball, softball, and boys and girls track & field, and awards one National Player of the Year in each sport. The selection process is administered by the Gatorade high school sports leadership team in partnership with [USA TODAY High School Sports](#), which work with top sport-specific experts and a media advisory board of accomplished, veteran prep sports journalists to determine the state winners in each sport.

Badger joins Gatorade Nevada Girls Cross Country Runners of the Year Mary Jo Wright (2011-12, Elko High School), Katie Gorczyca (2010-11, Palo Verde High School) and Kelsey Smith (2009-10, 2008-09 & 2007-08, South Tahoe) as athletes who have won the cross country award since its inception in 2007.

To keep up to date on the latest happenings, become a fan of Gatorade Player of the Year on Facebook and follow us on Twitter. For more on the Gatorade Player of the Year program, including nomination information, a complete list of past winners and the announcement of the Gatorade National Player of the Year, visit playeroftheyear.gatorade.com.

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